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**Title:** Anson Stiles Blake papers

**Date (inclusive):** 1882-1959

**Collection Number:** MS 204

**Creator:** Blake, Anson Stiles, 1870-1959

**Physical Description:** 1.5 boxes(0.75 Linear feet)

**Repository:** California Historical Society

678 Mission StreetSan Francisco, CA, 94105415-357-1848reference@calhist.orgURL: <http://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org/>

**Physical Location:** Collection is stored onsite.

**Language of Materials:** Collection materials are in English

**Abstract:** Consists chiefly of typescripts and manuscripts of Blake's speeches to San Francisco Bay Area social clubs and organizations, concerning California history and contemporary issues, including labor relations, the cement and asphalt business, Berkeley, and other topics. Includes papers relating to his participation with the California Historical Society and the Society of California Pioneers, and a small amount of personal correspondence, receipts, and miscellany. Also includes some material on Blake's father, Charles Thompson Blake and his travelling and business partners, Roger Sherman Baldwin, Charles T.H. Palmer, and Caspar T. Hopkins, who is represented by a [1932] typed copy of his autobiography, written in 1888-1889.

**Access**

Collection is open for research.

**Publication Rights**

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**Preferred Citation**

[Identification of item], Anson Stiles Blake Papers. MS 204, California Historical Society, North Baker Research Library.

**Separated Materials**

Photographs shelved as MSP 204.

**Related Collections**

Anson S. Blake Business Records, MS 203 Charles Thompson Blake Letters and Miscellany, 1849-1865, MS 204A

**Note**

This entry replaces NUCMC number 75-235.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Blake, Charles Thompson, 1826-1897

Hopkins, Caspar T. (Caspar Thomas), 1826-1893

Businessmen.

California--History.

Industrial relations--California.

Quarries and quarrying--California.

Agriculture--California [Folder 26](#)

American Federation of Labor [Folder 14](#)

Art--San Francisco Bay [Folder 32](#)

Berkeley, California, 1875-1900 [Folder 8](#)

Berkeley, California--Transportation--Railroads [Folder 9](#)

Berkeley, University of California [Folder 8](#)

Bidwell, John [Folder 18](#)

Botany [Folder 16](#)

California--Emigration [Folder 17, 18](#)

California--History, 1861-1865 [Folder 11](#)

California--Politics and government, 1849-1879 [Folder 21](#)

Chapman, Charles E. [Folder 15](#)

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Cleland, Robert G. [Folder 15](#)  
Collective bargaining [Folder 14, 21](#)  
Congress of Industrial Organizations [Folder 14](#)  
Conservation [Folder 30](#)  
East Bay Municipal Utility District--History [Folder 17](#)  
Kensington, California [Folder 22](#)  
Labor--California [Folder 29](#)  
Labor disputes [Folder 21, 34](#)  
Mines and mining [Folder 25](#)  
Palmer, Charles T. [Folder 24, 35](#)  
Prohibition--California [Folder 27](#)  
Race relations [Folder 28](#)  
San Francisco--Politics and government, 1846-1848 [Folder 31](#)  
San Francisco--Social life and customs, 1846-1848 [Folder 31](#)  
San Francisco Bay [Folder 31, 32](#)  
Street-cars--Berkeley, California [Folder 9](#)  
Sutter, John A. [Folder 24](#)  
Sutter's Fort [Folder 24](#)  
Trade-unions [Folder 23, 29](#)  
Wine and winemaking [Folder 27](#)

**Acquisition Information**

Source unknown.

**Accruals**

No additions are expected.

**Processing Information**

Processed by California Historical Society staff.

**Scope and Content**

Consists chiefly of typescripts and manuscripts of Blake's speeches to San Francisco Bay Area social clubs and organizations, concerning California history and contemporary issues, including labor relations, the cement and asphalt business, Berkeley, and other topics. Includes papers relating to his participation with the California Historical Society and the Society of California Pioneers, and a small amount of personal correspondence, receipts, and miscellany. Also includes some material on Blake's father, Charles Thompson Blake and his travelling and business partners, Roger Sherman Baldwin, Charles T.H. Palmer, and Caspar T. Hopkins, who is represented by a [1932] typed copy of his autobiography, written in 1888-1889.

**Biography**

Anson Stiles Blake was born in San Francisco on August 6, 1870. He was the son of Harriet Stiles Blake and Charles Thompson Blake. His father, C.T. Blake was an early pioneer to San Francisco, arriving in 1849 from New Haven, Connecticut after a difficult voyage through Central America. Anson Blake attended Lincoln Grammar School and Boy's High School in San Francisco before moving with his family to Berkeley where he attended the University. Upon graduation in 1891 Blake went to work for the Bay Rock Company in Oakland, moving two years later to the Oakland Paving Company a macadamizing outfit run by his father and his father's associate C.T.H. Palmer. In 1899 he became president of that company. In 1894 he married Anita Day Symmes, a recent U.C. graduate.

Blake's interest in such businesses arose from his father's and grandfather's own mining and mine-equipment backgrounds. (His grandfather patented the Blake Rock Crusher in 1858.) In 1904 he helped to form the San Pablo Quarry Company which supplied materials to the city of San Francisco for its rebuilding after the earthquake. In 1914 the company, which later became Blake Brother's in Richmond, was created and this business was in Blake's control until 1954. Rock from this company helped to keep islands in the Sacramento-San Joaquin from flooding in addition to supplying the bayside rock edges of Treasure Island for the 1939 Fair there.

Throughout his life, however, Blake's interests diversified far beyond those of the quarrying concern. He took an interest while still at Berkeley in the University YMCA - Stiles Hall - (donated by his grandmother,) and helped to support it throughout his life. He was a member of many clubs including the Berkeley City Club, the Claremont Country Club the Athenian Club and others. He wrote prolifically on a wide variety of subjects and was a frequent speech-giver. Speech topics covered such subjects as, Racial Contrasts on the Southwestern Frontier, to the effects of Prohibition on California grape growers. Usually, though, they dealt with history. He was president of both the

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Society of Calif. Pioneers and the Calif. Historical Society, the latter from 1945-48. He was on the Board of Trustees of CHS from 1924-1959 and was made a fellow in 1958. He did extensive research on his father, concentrating on the years Charles Blake spent mining in the Sierras during the Gold Rush. Among Anson Blake's papers are letters written by his father's traveling and business partners describing their trip to California and the Gold Rush.

In 1953 the California State Legislature bestowed upon him the title of Grand Old Man of Stiles Hall in honor of his 50 years of service. In 1958 he was awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree by the University. He died on August 17, 1959, eleven days after his 89th birthday.

Box 1, Folder 1 **Correspondence, receipts, notes and memorabilia 1867-1959**

**Organizations**

Box 1, Folder 2 **California Historical Society 1936, 1941, 1956-1957, undated**  
Box 1, Folder 3 **Society of California Pioneers 1929, 1937, undated**  
Box 1, Folder 4 **Centennial Celebrations Committee 1946**

Box 1, Folder 5 **Caspar T. Hopkins Autobiography 1888-1889**

Box 1, Folder 7 **Charles Thompson Blake, Notes from newspapers undated**

**Writings and Speeches**

Box 1, Folder 8 **Berkeley in Retrospect undated**  
Box 1, Folder 9 **[Berkeley] The Land on Which We Live, Part 2 undated**  
Box 1, Folder 10 **California Historical Society: The Infant Years 1957 May 9**  
Box 1, Folder 11 **California in the Civil War undated**  
Box 1, Folder 12 **[California Water and Reclamation] undated**  
Box 1, Folder 13 **Codes and Code Making undated**  
Box 1, Folder 14 **Collective Bargaining in Practice undated**  
Box 1, Folder 15 **The Companion Histories of California unadted**  
Box 1, Folder 16 **David Douglas, A Pioneer Botanist in Action undated**  
Box 1, Folder 17 **East Bay Municipal Utility District undated**  
Box 1, Folder 18 **The First Emigrant Train to California undated**  
Box 2, Folder 19 **The First Steamship Pioneers to California undated**  
Box 2, Folder 20 **The Hudson's Bay Company in San Francisco undated**  
Box 2, Folder 21 **The Initiative Incubates Ham and Eggs undated**  
Box 2, Folder 22 **Kensington (The Carmelite Monastery and Blake property there) undated**  
Box 2, Folder 23 **[The Labor Situation in the Industrial Community] undated**  
Box 2, Folder 24 **Life at Sutter's Fort undated**  
Box 2, Folder 25 **Life in the California Mines, 1850-1852 undated**  
Box 2, Folder 26 **The Problem of a Rural Population undated**  
Box 2, Folder 27 **Prohibition and the Grape Growers undated**  
Box 2, Folder 28 **Racial Contrasts on the Southwestern Frontier undated**  
Box 2, Folder 29 **Rights of Minorities in the Present Labor Situation undated**  
Box 2, Folder 30 **Sacramento, San Joaquin Valleys, early views of California and conservation of natural resources undated**  
  
Box 2, Folder 31 **San Francisco, 1846-1848 undated**  
Box 2, Folder 32 **[Two Early Paintings of San Francisco Bay] undated**  
Box 2, Folder 33 **The United States Reclamation Services undated**  
Box 2, Folder 34 **[Wartime and governmental expenditures] 1945?**  
Box 2, Folder 35 **Working for Wells Fargo, 1860-1863 undated**